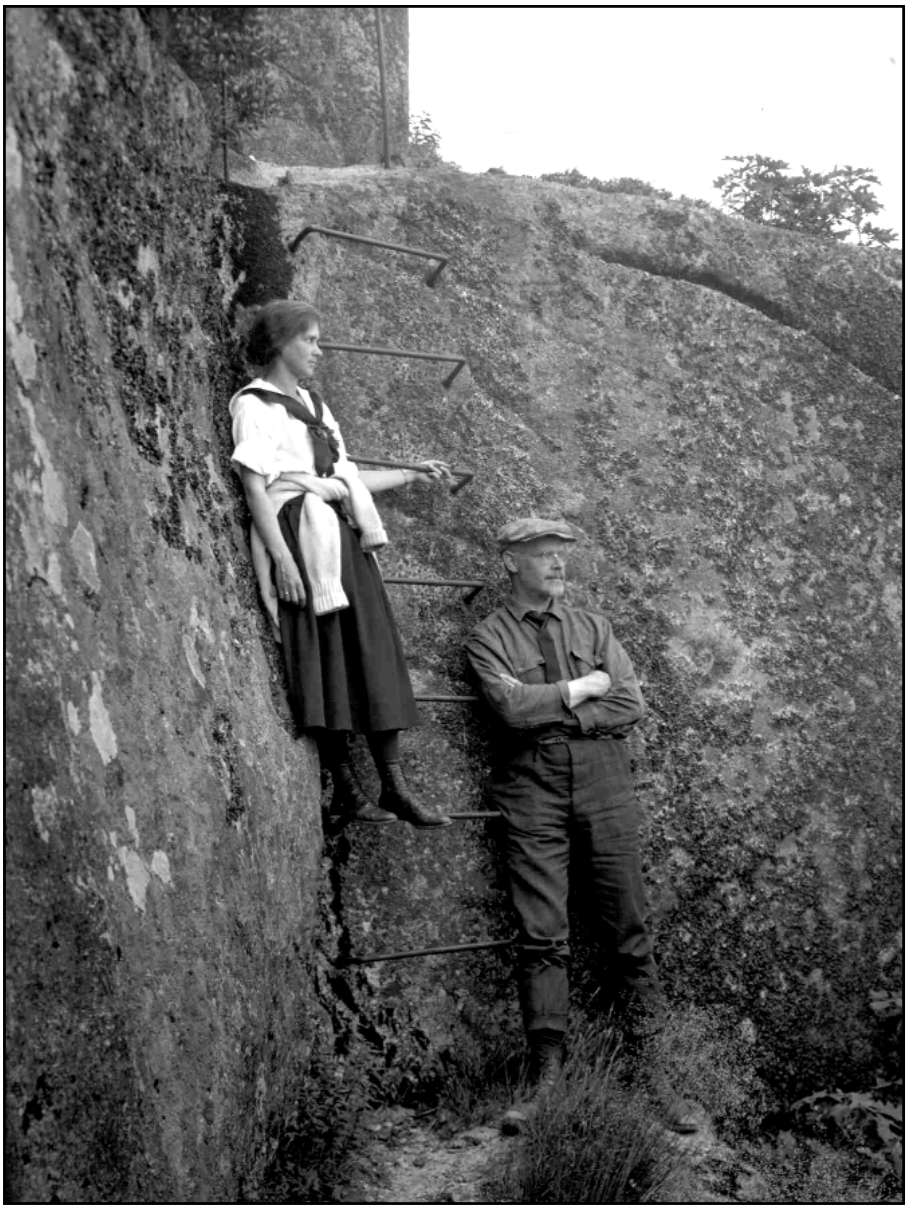
SECTION THREE – FACT SHEETS

Chapter Nineteen – Cultural History

Park History
Carriage Roads of Acadia National Park
Acadia's Historic Trails
Fire of 1947
Portrait of Three 19th Century Families—The Carrolls, Hadlocks, and Gilleys



Fact Sheet – Park History

Deep shell heaps indicate American Indian encampments dating back 6,000 years in Acadia National Park, but prehistoric records are scanty. The first written descriptions of Maine coast Indians, recorded 100 years after European trade contacts began, describe American Indians who lived off the land by hunting, fishing, collecting shellfish, and gathering plants and berries. The Wabanaki Indians knew Mount Desert Island as Pemetic, "a range of mountains." They built bark-covered conical shelters, and traveled in exquisitely designed birch bark canoes. Historical notes record that the Wabanaki wintered in interior forests and spent their summers near the coast. Archeological evidence suggests the opposite pattern; in order to avoid harsh inland winters and to take advantage of salmon runs upstream, American Indians wintered on the coast and summered inland.

NEW FRANCE

The first meeting between the people of Pemetic and the Europeans is a matter of conjecture. But it was a Frenchman, Samuel Champlain, who made the first important contribution to the historical record of Mount Desert Island. He led the expedition that landed on Mount Desert on September 5, 1604 and wrote in his journal, "The mountain summits are all bare and rocky… I name it Isles des Monts Desert." Champlain's visit to Acadia sixteen years before the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock destined this land to become known as New France before it became New England.

In 1613, French Jesuits, welcomed by Indians, were believed to have established the first French mission in America on what is now Fernald Point, near the entrance to Somes Sound. They had just begun to build a fort, plant their corn, and baptize the natives when an English ship, commanded by Captain Samuel Argall, destroyed their mission.

The English victory at Fernald Point doomed Jesuit ambitions on Mount Desert Island, leaving the land in a state of limbo, lying between the French, firmly entrenched to the north, and the British, whose settlements in Massachusetts and southward were becoming increasingly numerous. No one wished to settle in this contested territory and for the next 150 years, Mount Desert Island's importance was primarily its use as a landmark for seamen.

There was a brief period when it seemed Mount Desert would again become a center of French activity. In 1688, Antoine Laumet, an ambitious young man who had immigrated to New France and bestowed upon himself the title Sieur de la Mothe

Cadillac, asked for and received a hundred thousand acres of land along the Maine coast, including all of Mount Desert. Cadillac's hopes of establishing a feudal estate in the New World, however, were short lived. Although he and his bride resided here for a time, they soon abandoned their enterprise. Cadillac later gained lasting recognition as the founder of Detroit.

NEW ENGLAND

In 1759, after a century and a half of conflict, British troops triumphed at Quebec, ending French dominion in Acadia. With Indians scattered and the fleur-de-lis banished, lands along the Maine coast opened for English settlement. Governor Francis Bernard of Massachusetts obtained a royal land grant on Mount Desert Island. In 1760, Bernard attempted to secure his claim by offering free land to settlers. Abraham Somes and James Richardson accepted the offer and settled their families at what is now Somesville.

The onset of the Revolutionary War ended Bernard's plans for Mount Desert Island. In its aftermath, Bernard lost his claim, and the newly created United States of America granted the western half of Mount Desert Island to John Bernard, son of the governor, and the eastern half of the island to Marie Therese de Gregoire, granddaughter of Cadillac. Bernard and de Gregoire soon sold their landholdings to nonresident landlords.

Their real estate transactions probably made very little difference to the increasing number of settlers homesteading on Mount Desert Island. By 1820, farming and lumbering vied with fishing and shipbuilding as major occupations. Settlers converted hundreds of acres of trees into wood products ranging from schooners and barns to baby cribs and hand tools. Farmers harvested wheat, rye, corn, and potatoes. By 1850, the familiar sights of fishermen and sailors, fish racks and shipyards, revealed a way of life linked to the sea.

It was the outsiders—artists and journalists—who revealed and popularized this island to the world in the mid-1800s. Painters of the Hudson River School, including Thomas Cole and Frederic Church, glorified Mount Desert Island with their brushstrokes, inspiring patrons and friends to flock here. These were the "rusticators." Undaunted by crude accommodations and simple food, they sought out local fishermen and farmers to put them up for a modest fee. Summer after summer, the rusticators returned to renew friendships with local islanders and, most of all, to savor the fresh salt air, beautiful scenery, and relaxed pace. Soon the villagers' cottages and fishermen's huts filled to overflowing, and by 1880, 30 hotels competed for vacationers' dollars. Tourism was becoming the major industry.

For a select handful of Americans, the 1880s and the "Gay Nineties" meant affluence on a scale without precedent. Mount Desert, still remote from the cities of the east, became a retreat for prominent people of the times. The Rockefellers, Morgans, Fords, Vanderbilts, Carnegies, and Astors, chose to spend their summers here. Not content with the simple lodgings then available, these families transformed the landscape of Mount Desert Island with elegant estates, euphemistically called "cottages." Luxury, refinement, and ostentatious gatherings replaced buckboard rides, picnics, and day-long hikes of an earlier era. For over 40 years, the wealthy held sway at Mount Desert, but the Great Depression and World War II marked the end of such extravagance. The final blow came in 1947 when a fire of monumental proportions consumed many of the great estates.

Though the affluent of the turn of the century came here to frolic, they had much to do with preserving the landscape that we know today. It was from this social strata that George B. Dorr, a tireless spokesman for conservation, devoted 43 years of his life, energy, and family fortune to preserving the Acadian landscape. In 1901, disturbed by the growing development of the Bar Harbor area and the dangers he foresaw in the newly invented gasoline powered portable sawmill, George Dorr and others established the Hancock County Trustees of Public Reservations. The corporation, whose sole purpose was to preserve land for the perpetual use of the public, acquired 6,000 acres by 1913. Dorr offered the land to the federal government, and in 1916, President Wilson announced the creation of Sieur de Monts National Monument. Dorr continued to acquire property and renewed his efforts to obtain full national park status for his beloved preserve. In 1919, President Wilson signed the act establishing Lafayette National Park, the first national park east of the Mississippi. Dorr, whose labors constituted "greatest of one-man shows in the history of land conservation" became the first park superintendent.

In 1929, the park name changed to Acadia. Today the park encompasses close to 48,000 acres, and the simple pleasures of "ocean, forests, lakes, and mountains" that for over a century and a quarter have been sought and found by millions, are yours to enjoy.

See also appendix E for additional information.

Fact Sheet – Carriage Roads of Acadia National Park

Forty-five miles of rustic carriage roads weave around the mountains and through the valleys of Acadia National Park, the gift of philanthropist John D. Rockefeller, Jr., and family. Rockefeller, a skilled horseman, desired to travel on motor-free byways via horse and carriage into the heart of Mount Desert Island. His construction efforts from 1913-1940 resulted in roads with sweeping vistas and close-up views of the landscape. His love of road building ensured a state-of-the-art system. Rockefeller's love of road building grew naturally from his father's. John D. Rockefeller, Sr., the founder of Standard Oil, had built and landscaped carriage roads on his Ohio and New York estates. The junior Rockefeller learned many techniques from his father which he applied to building his Mount Desert Island carriage roads.

STATE OF THE ART ROADS

The carriage roads are broken stone roads, a type commonly built at the turn of the century. Acadia's roads are the best example of broken stone roads left in America today. They are true roads, approximately sixteen feet wide, constructed with methods which required much hand labor. The roads were engineered to contend with Maine's wet weather. Three layers of rock, stone culverts, wide ditches, and a substantial six to eight inch crown ensured good drainage.

Rather than flattening hillsides to accommodate the roads, breast walls and retaining walls were built to preserve the line of hillsides and save many trees. Rockefeller, naturally gifted with the eye of a landscape architect, aligned the roads to follow contours of the land and to take advantage of scenic views. He graded the roads so they were not too steep or too sharply curved for horse drawn carriages. Road crews quarried island granite for road material and bridge facing. Roadsides were landscaped with native vegetation such as blueberries and sweet fern. The use of native materials helped blend the roads into the natural landscape.

AN INTEGRATED SYSTEM

Rockefeller participated in the construction process. He walked areas staked out for road alignment and observed work in progress. He knew the laborers by name and used experts to design the bridges and engineer the roads. Throughout it all, he paid rapt attention to the minutest details, from the placement of coping stones, to the cost of a running foot of road.

Following are some elements that unify the carriage road system:

Coping stones
Large blocks of granite bordering the roads serve as guardrails. Cut roughly and spaced irregularly, the coping stones create a rustic appearance. These coping stones have been affectionately called Rockefeller's teeth.

Signposts
Cedar signposts were installed at intersections to direct carriage drivers. The posts were stained with Cabots shingle stain #248. The lettering was painted first with one coat of flat yellow paint, then with another coat of enamel yellow. Today, numbers are attached to the signposts which match maps and guidebooks, and help carriage road users find their way.

Roadside Grooming and Landscaping
Rockefeller employed a crew of foresters to remove debris from the roads and roadsides. Nationally known landscape architect, Beatrix Farrand, consulted on planting designs to frame vistas and bridges, and to heal scars left behind by carriage road construction. The Fire of '47 destroyed much of her work.

Gate Lodges
Two gate lodges, one at Jordan Pond and the other near Northeast Harbor, ornament the roads and serve as whimsical welcomes to the system. A third gate lodge was planned at Eagle Lake, but never built. During carriage road construction, engineer Paul Simpson and his family lived at the Jordan Pond Gate Lodge.

Bridges
Rockefeller financed 16 stone-faced bridges, each unique in design, to span streams, waterfalls, roads, and cliffsides. The bridges are steel-reinforced concrete, but the use of native stone for the facing gives them a natural appearance. Over time, the stone cutters grew very skilled and Rockefeller often requested them not to cut the facing too well lest the rustic look be lost!

The result of Rockefeller's vision and attention to detail is an integrated system of carriage roads that blends harmoniously with the landscape.

CARRIAGE ROAD REHABILITATION

In 1989, a historic resource study on the carriage roads was completed for the National Park Service. That study documented the sequence of the roads' development and construction and made recommendations for their rehabilitation and maintenance.

Between 1992 and 1995, the roads were extensively rehabilitated. Woody vegetation was removed from roads, shoulders, and ditches, and drainage systems were reestablished to arrest erosion. The crown and subgrade layers were restored and new surface materials applied to replace thousands of cubic yards washed away over the years. Coping stones were reset or replaced, and some of the historic vistas that once greeted horseback riders, carriage drivers, and walkers have been reopened. Rehabilitation was funded through a special program of federal construction funds with matching private funds. This funding will ensure that the roads will continue to be maintained in the future, close to their original condition.

A SPIRIT OF PHILANTHROPY

John D. Rockefeller, Jr., was one among several men and women who in some way contributed to the formation of Acadia National Park. Today, people still help preserve the park by donating time to work on trails and carriage roads, or to contribute financially to carriage road rehabilitation. Ask at the visitor center to learn how to join in these efforts. Such spirit allows the park to better meet its mission of protecting and preserving its cultural and natural resources for present and future generations.

See appendix F for a description of the carriage road bridges.

Fact Sheet – Acadia's Historic Trails

Mount Desert Island's present day trail system evolved over centuries of human use and settlement of the land. From American Indians who blazed trails on hunting forays, to European settlers who connected villages and harvested forests, their activities provided transportation routes on the island long before the first roads were built.

In the mid-1800s, rusticators came to the island to enjoy its beauty and to escape the bustle of large cities. They followed many of the existing paths and trails up mountains, through the woods, and along the ocean shoreline. Among the rusticators were Hudson River School artists Thomas Cole and Frederic Church. Their renderings of the island attracted city dwellers to experience the Maine coast. Many of those who traveled to the island were very wealthy. They built 80 and 100 room "cottages" in which to pass their summers. Some cottagers socialized at tennis matches, lawn parties, and horse shows. Others, like the rusticators before them, were lured by the natural beauty of the island and preferred hiking. By the end of the 1800s, an era of active trail building had begun. Trails lost their utilitarian origins and were transformed into paths that promoted interaction with, and enjoyment of, the natural landscape.

In 1891, the first extensive trail plans were drafted. Much of the trail building was sponsored by Village Improvement Societies. An innovative approach to funding construction was the creation of memorial paths. Individuals who financed a trail could name it after the person of their choice. Kurt Diederich's Climb, which ascends Dorr Mountain's east face, is a memorial path. Plaques were often set along the trails in memory of the person who was being honored.

Actual trail construction took innovative forms as well. Waldron Bates, chair of the Roads and Paths Committee of the Bar Harbor Village Improvement Association 1900-1909, was the first to incorporate stone stairways and iron rung ladders into trails to traverse cliffs, talus slopes, and other steep areas. An example of his work is Gorham Mountain's Cadillac Cliffs Trail. A plaque at the head of the trail memorializes Bates as *Pathmaker*.

Others who followed Waldron Bates carried on his legacy of innovation and craftsmanship. Rudolph Brunnow built the Precipice Trail over the formerly impassable cliffs of Champlain Mountain, and George Dorr, one of Acadia's founders and the park's first superintendent, promoted memorial paths. He oversaw the construction of several stairway trails leading from Sieur de Monts Spring to the summit of the mountain which now bears his name.

By 1915, over 200 miles of trails existed on the island. That same year, the state of Maine lifted the island's ban on automobiles. By 1920, the major trail building era had ended, while an interest in building motor roads intensified. The Seal Harbor Village Improvement Society recorded in 1929: "…an inevitable first effect of the oncoming of the automobile was the banishment of the horse and the desertion of foot paths and trails."

The Great Depression, however, brought the New Deal and the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) to Acadia National Park. Two camps were established on the island in 1933, one on McFarland Hill (now park headquarters), and the other just south of Long Pond on the west side of the island. A good deal of their work involved trails. East side crews primarily rehabilitated existing trails constructed by Village Improvement Societies. West side crews expanded the trail system on newly acquired tracts along the western mountains. The Perpendicular and Great Pond Trails are examples of work completed by the CCC.

Today, hikers can follow the footsteps of early settlers and American Indians, and outdoors enthusiasts of another era. Acadia's historic trails are still as challenging to present day hikers as to those of generations past, and their scenic values and ties to the landscape evoke the sense of awe experienced long ago.

Fact Sheet – Fire of 1947

Maine winters are long. Spring is always eagerly anticipated and this was especially true in 1947. The gloominess of WWII still lingered and everyone looked forward to the return of nice weather. Disappointingly, it rained continually through April, May, and most of June. Finally, at the end of June, the sun came out, temperatures soared, and a glorious summer emerged. But weather patterns continued to be odd that year. Through the summer and into the fall, Maine received only 50% of its normal rainfall. Vegetation became bone dry. Water supplies dwindled. Still, most people did not worry—rain would come eventually. The island enjoyed one of the most beautiful Indian summers in memory. But the autumn rains never came and by mid-October, Mount Desert Island was experiencing the driest conditions ever recorded. The stage was set for a disastrous blaze.

On Friday, October 17, 1947, at 4 pm, the fire department received a call from Mrs. Gilbert, who lived near Dolliver's dump on Crooked Road west of Hulls Cove. She reported smoke rising from a cranberry bog between her home and the dump. No one knows what started the fire. It could have been cranberry pickers smoking cigarettes in the bog. Or perhaps it was sunlight shining through a piece of broken glass in the dump that acted like an incendiary magnifying glass. Whatever the cause, once ignited, the fire smoldered underground. From this quiet beginning arose an inferno that burned nearly half the eastern side of Mount Desert Island and made international news.

In its first three days, the fire burned a relatively small area, blackening only 169 acres. But on October 21, strong winds fanned the flames and the blaze spread rapidly and raged out of control, engulfing over 2,000 acres. Personnel from the army air corps, navy, coast guard, University of Maine forestry program, and Bangor Theological Seminary joined local fire fighting crews. National Park Service employees flew in from parks throughout the east and additional experts in the west were put on standby.

The pace of the blaze intensified and nearly 2,300 acres burned on October 22. The fire crossed Route 233 and continued along the western shore of Eagle Lake. On the morning of October 23, the wind shifted, pushing one finger of the fire toward Hulls Cove. Firefighters shifted their efforts in an attempt to squelch the threat to that community. But in the afternoon, the wind suddenly turned again and increased to gale proportions, as a dry cold front moved through, sending the inferno directly toward Bar Harbor. In less than three hours the wildfire traveled six miles, leaving behind a three mile wide path of destruction. The fire swept down Millionaires'

Row, an impressive collection of majestic summer cottages on the shore of Frenchman Bay. Sixty-seven of these seasonal estates were destroyed. The fire skirted the business district, but razed 170 permanent homes and five large historic hotels in the area surrounding downtown Bar Harbor.

Bar Harbor residents not actively engaged in fire fighting tried to find safety, fleeing first to the athletic field and later to the town pier. At one point all roads from the town were blocked by flames, so fishermen from nearby Winter Harbor, Gouldsboro, and Lamoine prepared to help with a mass exodus by boat. At least 400 people left by sea. Finally, by 9 pm, bulldozers opened a pathway through the rubble on Route 3 and a caravan of 700 cars carrying 2,000 people began the slow trip to safety in Ellsworth. According to eyewitness reports, it was a terrifying drive- cars were pelted by sparks and flames flickered overhead. But the motorcade was orderly and successful, an uplifting end to a day that saw close to 11,000 additional acres blackened.

Still, the fire continued to burn. From Bar Harbor, the blaze raced down the coast almost to Otter Point, engulfing and destroying the Jackson Laboratory on its way. The fire blew itself out over the ocean in a massive fireball. But that wasn't the end of the destruction. Almost 2,000 more acres burned before the fire was declared under control on October 27. Organic soil and vegetation on the forest floor, along with matted tree roots infiltrating deeply around granite boulders, fueled stubborn underground fires. Even weeks later, after rain and snow had fallen, fire still smoldered below ground. The fire was not pronounced completely out until 4pm on November 14.

EPILOGUE

In all, some 17,188 acres burned. Over 10,000 acres of this was in Acadia National Park. Property damage exceeded 23 million dollars. Considering the magnitude of the fire, loss of human life had been minimal. An elderly man returned to his home to save his cat and was never seen alive again. A car accident claimed the lives of an air force officer and a local teenage girl. A man and woman, already ill, succumbed to heart attacks. An unknown number of animals died in the blaze, but park rangers believe that most outran the fire and found safety in ponds and lakes.

Once the fire was over, it was time to start anew. Two crews, one hired by the park and one hired by the Rockefeller family, logged selected park areas for timber salvage and clean-up. Some timber was milled, slash was burned, and other logs, still visible today, were left to prevent soil erosion.

Nature, however, played the predominant role in the island's restoration. The forests that exist today re-grew naturally. Wind carried seeds back into burned areas and some deciduous trees regenerated by stump sprouts or suckers. Today's forest, however, is often different than what grew before the fire. Spruce and fir that reigned before the fire have given way to sun-loving trees, such as birch and aspen. But these deciduous trees are short-lived. As they grow and begin to shade out the forest floor, they provide a nursery for the shade-loving spruce and fir which may eventually reclaim the territory.

Fire has an important natural role. It clears away mature growth, opening areas to the sun-loving species that are food for wildlife. The fire of 1947 increased diversity in the composition and age structure of the park's forests. It even enhanced the scenery. Today, instead of one uniform evergreen forest, we are treated to a brilliant mix of red, yellow, and orange supplied by the new diverse deciduous forests.

Bar Harbor, too, was changed by the fire. Most of the permanent residents rebuilt their homes, but many of the grand summer cottages were not replaced. In fact, many of the seasonal families never returned. The estates on Millionaires' Row have been replaced by motels that house the ever-increasing tourist population. But the fire alone cannot be blamed for ending the island's once-grand "cottage era." The opulent lifestyle had already been suffering from the effects of the newly invented income tax and the Depression. The destructive flames merely provided a final blow. The fire on Mount Desert Island was publicized in headlines in newspapers around the world because the island was a renowned summer retreat for the wealthy. But actually, the fall of 1947 was a dry one throughout the state, and many serious fires occurred. State-wide, over 200,000 acres, 851 permanent homes, and 397 seasonal cottages were destroyed in "the year Maine burned."

See also fire management fact sheet, page 3-91.

Fact Sheet – Portrait of Three 19th Century Families

When history is recorded it is frequently the unusual or the remarkable individual that is remembered. Those who have made new discoveries or accomplished great feats are deemed the most noteworthy. But this leads to an incomplete picture, for far more people live their lives in happy obscurity than ever make it into a volume of "Who's Who in America." To fully understand history we must know the story of the ordinary citizen as well as the extraordinary citizen. The following three accounts profile three ordinary families in the Mount Desert Island region during the 1800s.

THE CARROLL FAMILY

(*Visit their homestead in Southwest Harbor on Route 102.*)
When John and Rachel Carroll moved into their farm house in the fall of 1825 they could not have imagined that it would one day be preserved as an historic resource in Acadia National Park. A piece of land given to them by Rachel's parents would set the stage for the building of the one and a half story Greek revival style house, built of hand hewn posts and beams on a fieldstone foundation with a cellar. The next three generations of Carrolls would all call the "Mountain House" home. John and Rachel would have six children, five daughters and one son.

The homestead became a subsistence farm common to the coast of Maine in the 19th century. Its purpose was to provide for the needs of the family. There was a kitchen garden behind the house, but most of the property was left in wood lots. Agricultural production for commercial sale and use was never a goal. Farms like the Carrolls were self-sufficient, although with never-ending chores. They could provide food, clothing, and shelter for their owners. It was, however, a cash-poor economy. To make money needed to buy things that were not grown locally such as coffee, sugar, and spices, many Mainers turned to the sea, spending some months of the year fishing or in the shipping trade. John Carroll turned to the trade he had learned as a boy back in Ireland: masonry.

John Carroll died in 1867 at the age of 77. Rachel continued to live at the Mountain House until her death in 1881 at the age of 90. She had lived in the house for 56 years, longer than anyone else ever would. After his father's death, Jacob Carroll, John's only son, inherited the property. Jacob did not move into the Mountain House right away, however. He had been a sailor since the age of fourteen and had spent most of his life at sea. The only one of the Carroll men to pursue a career at sea, Jacob crossed the Atlantic five times and sailed around the world once. In his more than 25 years at sea, Jacob would visit many exotic and far away ports including Rio de Janeiro, Calcutta, Peru, Constantinople, Bombay, London, Amsterdam, and Paris.

Finally, at the age of 40, Jacob returned to Mount Desert Island and married Rebecca Whitmore Lurvey. Married, with property and family to tend to, Captain Carroll made shorter voyages to sea, instead primarily engaging in the coasting trade by owning shares of numerous ships. Jacob was very successful in this trade and his family's standard of living rose considerably during this time period. An important consideration, since there were now eight daughters and two sons in the family.

Rebecca's chores at home were probably easier than those her mother-in-law had known. An advantage of Jacob's profession was that he often brought both gifts and necessities home with him. The availability of factory-made and imported goods was an advantage appreciated by many island and coastal residents of Maine. The Carroll children, although not required by law to attend school walked to nearby Norwood Cove for classes. Schooling was for young children and for older children only when it did not interfere with work. Many children only attended school eight or nine weeks each year.

Toward the close of the 19th century, the rippling effects of industrialization were beginning to be felt. As the economy changed, the need for cash increased. When Jacob retired from sailing he began a second career working as a brick mason, frequently traveling to other parts of Mount Desert Island where the influx of visitors with their needs for hotel and cottages kept him in numerous jobs. Some of his daughters who were not married also worked. One daughter, Kate, moved to Medway, Massachusetts, to work in a straw hat factory. Some like Mary Ann Carroll, who never married, was a life-long teacher. (Look for her photo at the Islesford Historical Museum).

Jacob Carroll died in 1899 at the age of 69. His wife Rebecca left the homestead and moved to Southwest Harbor. John (II) Carroll and his wife Viola and their two small children moved into the Mountain House in 1900. They would raise six children.

Like his ancestors, John depended on the masonry trade for cash. Considering the incredible level of development on the island at the time, job security was not a concern. Most of the family's food continued to be grown on the farm. John especially loved his apple trees, which are still scattered about the homestead today. The children took advantage of the combination of the natural bounty of food and summertime visitors by selling extra produce and fresh-picked blueberries.

As cash flow increased, lifestyles changed. For the first time the Carroll family owned a horse and carriage. Prior to that time they walked, or rowed, everywhere. With fewer chores to do the Carroll children were able to attend school regularly.

All of John and Viola's children graduated from high school. The family life was becoming more centered on social and business activities centered in Southwest Harbor, and although life at the Mountain House was good, it was becoming inconvenient. In 1917 the family moved to Southwest Harbor, ending four generations of Carrolls who called the Mountain House home. The house would be used in the summer, and later rented to summer visitors. In 1982 it was donated to Acadia National Park.

THE HADLOCKS

(*Memorabilia from the Hadlocks can be found at the Islesford Historical Museum.*)
Two of the busiest and most productive fishing communities in Maine were off the Mount Desert Island Coast—the Cranberry Isles and Southwest Harbor (on Mount Desert Island). A common sight was fishing boats headed for Labrador or the Grand Banks, or ships returning from Europe or the West Indies. At one time 85 ships called these harbors their home port. As Ted Spurling, a descendent of one of the Cranberry Isles sea captains noted:

"Usually, they went down to the West Indies…They'd take salt fish down there or maybe potatoes, or sometimes (in later years) they would take an ice cargo. They'd go to the tropics. They'd take ice and granite…They'd take popple stones off the beaches and a lot of these cobble stone roads in Boston, like that are made—they call them popple stones. And there were all kinds of different cargo they'd get from the land…but an awful lot of it was salt fish."

The ledgers and logs found in the Hadlock Ship's Store certainly account for this trade with entries regarding molasses, rum, and sugar being quite common. The Hadlock family represents a maritime family, with a Civil War captain and an overseas adventurer thrown in for good measure.

With profits from an oversea voyage, the first Hadlock store was built in the early 1800s. The operation was later enlarged in 1850 by adding the current building standing on the island's waterfront. From a ship's store housing a sail loft and carrying maritime goods and then to a general store, the structure's use changed as times changed.

Samuel Hadlock VI (1770-1854), moved to Little Cranberry Island in 1791, where he acquired a large part of the island property and was instrumental in establishing the waterfront settlement now called Islesford. In 1808 Samuel Hadlock VI, using the proceeds from a fishing expedition, built a ships store, one of the first commercial waterfront buildings in Islesford. By 1850, his son Edwin had built another ship's store, the building now known as the Blue Duck.

Hadlock built many vessels, some of which were commanded by his sons. All but one of his five sons died or were lost at sea. His oldest son, Samuel, master of the ill-fated *Minerva*, was lost with all hands "at the ice" in 1829. Elijah, master of the brig Beaver, died on board of yellow fever the year before. Epps, master of the schooner Otter, and his brother Gilbert, were lost with all hands in the West Indies in 1831.

In 1848, several years before Samuel Hadlock VI died, the schooner *Samuel Hadlock*, was built on Little Cranberry Island. The largest vessel constructed in the Mount Desert region, this vessel was commanded by Edwin Hadlock, Samuel Hadlock's only surviving son. Edwin barely escaped a similar fate on a voyage from Tampico, Mexico, to New York in the spring of 1849, which took almost two months. Baffled by head winds and heavy seas, with men growing weaker and weaker and with hope almost gone, Edwin could record in the log, "Still a head wind and heavy seas. On allowance of one quart of water and one pound of bread per man. And so ends the twenty four hours on allowance and no tobacco. Providence doeth what seemed right in His sight."

THE GILLEYS

(Baker Island accessible only by boat)

About the year 1806, William Gilley and Hannah Lurvey Gilley moved with their three small children from Norwood's Cove (Southwest Harbor) on Mount Desert Island to Baker Island. Before the move, Gilley had fished, worked on coastal vessels, cut wood, and farmed. The move to Baker was a calculated risk, difficult perhaps in the isolation they might face, but not in the hard work that would lay ahead. No transaction of money occurred for the island; they just simply lay claim to it.
On this beautiful island, with a spectacular view to the north of the whole Mount Desert Island mountain range, where all around lay the glistening sea, at times calm and reflective of sun and sky; at other times gray and frothy and wild, the Gilleys would raise six sons and six daughters

After 10 years and much hard labor, the Gilleys had changed a part of a rocky, wooded island into a reasonable farm with six cows, a yoke of oxen, two or three young cattle, about 50 sheep, and three or four hogs. Surrounded by the sea, food was abundant. Lobster could be picked from shallow pools along the rocky shore. Fish were caught most of the year. Seabird eggs were collected and eaten. The livestock raised and vegetables grown all added to their well-rounded diet.
Clothing came from the wool of their own sheep wove into cloth by Hannah and the girls and then sewn into garments. Bare feet were the rule most of the year, with shoes used only during the coldest of months.

Cash, still needed for purchasing essentials they could not raise or make on their own, came through selling feathers of seabirds, eggs, and butter in Southwest Harbor. In 1828, William Gilley's appointment as a lighthouse keeper at Baker Island in 1828 offered a new occupation. Hannah, who was raised in Massachusetts was fairly educated and made sure that her children learned to read and write. Nearly every Sunday in the summer Hannah took the eldest children 14 miles round-trip, in an open boat, to the Congregational Church at Southwest Harbor.

The twelve children raised by the Gilleys all lived to maturity, and Hannah and William would have 58 grandchildren. A small graveyard on the island is the final resting place of some of their descendents.

Under Acadia's care, the stories of these families are preserved as an example of a bygone way of life. Park visitors with boat access to Baker Island can step back in time and encounter a piece of the history of coastal Maine in the 19th century.